

VZCZCXRO6226
OO RUEHAG RUEHBC RUEHDE RUEHKUK RUEHROV
DE RUEHTH #1070 2071331
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
O 251331Z JUL 08
FM AMEMBASSY ATHENS
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2242
INFO RUEHEE/ARAB LEAGUE COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUCNMEM/EU MEMBER STATES COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUEHAK/AMEMBASSY ANKARA PRIORITY 5232
RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW PRIORITY 1031
RUEHNY/AMEMBASSY OSLO PRIORITY 0214
RUEHRK/AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK PRIORITY 0019
RUEHDM/AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS PRIORITY 0295
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RHEHAAA/NSC WASHDC PRIORITY
RHMFISS/HQ USEUCOM VAIHINGEN GE PRIORITY
RHMFISS/CDR USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL PRIORITY
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY 0367

C O N F I D E N T I A L ATHENS 001070

SIPDIS

DEPT ALSO FOR EUR/SE AND NEA/ELA

E.O.12958: DECL: 07/24/2018

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [SY](#) [LE](#) [EU](#) [RS](#) [TU](#) [NO](#) [SW](#)

SUBJECT: GREECE/SYRIA: GREEK VIEWS ON DEALING WITH THE SARG

REF: . STATE 78880

[1](#)B. ATHENS 802

Classifie By: A/Political Counselor Jeff Hovenier for 1.4 (b) and (d)

[1](#)1. (C) A/Pol Counselor delivered ref A points on the Syrian Arab Republic Government (SARG) on 7/24 to George Ayfandis, acting Director of the MFA A-6 Directorate for Arab Countries and the Middle East. Ayfandis said that Greece shared U.S. concerns about the SARG, highlighting, in particular, Syrian "misbehavior" in Lebanon, support for Hizballah, and "intractable behavior" related to the Golon Heights. He added that the GOG believed the SARG had been pressing Hizballah to take (unspecified) action against UNIFIL - a mission in which Greek forces are deployed. Ayfandis noted that during French President Sarkozy's recent visit to Athens (ref B), he had raised Syria with PM Karamanlis and FM Bakoyannis, and the Greeks had perceived that Sarkozy was "quite focused" on Syria, but "perplexed about what to do."

[1](#)2. (C) Ayfandis also suggested that Turkey should be "more realistic" about Syria, noting that the Turks have not been "sufficiently critical" in their relations with Syria.

[1](#)3. (C) Ayfandis said that the "EU has a problem with Syria, because it has a problem in Lebanon." However, he was skeptical that the EU would be taking decisions related to Syria anytime soon. Taking a long-term perspective, he said much would depend on signals related to the Middle East, and Syria in particular, during the U.S. election campaign and the views of the next administration.
SPECKHARD